GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVATION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:204
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2003
SAFE BUILDING CONSTRUCTIONS
BHASKAR RAO PATIL;NARESH KUMAR PUGLIA

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has directed the State Governments to adopt norms laid down for seismically safe building constructions in areas which are vulnerable to earthquake;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether some State Governments are not following the norms of the Union Government and allowing building activities which are unsafe;

(d) if so, the details in this regard; and

(e) the remedial steps taken by the Union Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA)

(a)to(e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 204 FOR 16.12.2003 REGARDING BUILDING CONSTRUCTIONS.

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): The Ministry of Urban Development & PovertyAlleviation has taken the following steps to emphasise on the State Governments the need and urgency to adopt norms and provision of Indian Standards and Codes for seismically safe building construction:

- In May, 1998, the Secretary (Urban Development) wrote to all Chief Secretaries, advising them to bring in necessary modifications in their respective building bye-laws and regulations, land use zoning practices, development control rules and town & country planning acts to ensure safer construction.

- The Minister for Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation, inFebruary 2001, had addressed all Chief Ministers requesting them to adopt a Techno Legal Regime involving suitable amendments and revision of existing building bye-laws and regulations to ensure quake resistant construction of buildings and houses.

- The Ministry had called a meeting of the Ministers in charge of Housing & Urban Development from all States/UTs inMarch, 2001. Imminent need to suitably modify the Building Bye-laws and Development Control Regulations for incorporatingmandatory provisions to ensure use of existing Standards, Codes and guidelines, formulated by Bureau of Indian Standards for construction of earthquake resistant houses and other buildings was especially impressed upon at this meeting.

- In May 2001, the Ministry organised a Seminar onHabitat Safetyagainst Earthquakes and Cyclones in pursuance of the deliberations whereof the Department of Science & Technology has already initiated a programme for microzonation of Delhi and few other large cities to guide the construction activities in large urban centres.

- After the earthquakes of Uttarkashi (1991), Latur (1993), Jabalpur(1997), Chamoli (1999), Kutchch (2001), the Building Material Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC) had undertaken Rapid Damage Assessment Studies in various earthquake-affected States. Guidelines on safe construction practices in the earthquake regions were formulated and widely circulated, particularly, in the States with high vulnerability to earthquakes.

(c)to(e): The Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation has been constantly in touch with the State Governments to ensure that the latter incorporate the suitable amendments in their regulatory instruments like, building bye-laws, regulations, development control rules, master planning acts and land use practices. State-wise current status of action in regard to amendment of building bye-laws etc. is as under:

- Eleven States/Union Territories have already amended their building bye-laws and regulations.

- Nine States have set up a Committee or an Expert Group to lookinto the National Building Code and to see howthe required safety measures can be incorporated in the building bye-laws of different local bodies.

- Even though response is awaited from some States, so far, no State has sent a negative response.

The subject of building construction and the enforcement of bye-laws, regulations, development control rules etc. being a State subject, the Union Government is constantly pursuing with the State Governments to bring in suitable amendments in their bye-laws and development control rules so that the safety norms for building construction in earthquake prone areas are brought into practice and enforcement mechanisms established, at the earliest.